

Postcodes and Postal Areas (POAs)

What are postcodes?

A postcode is a four digit number used by Australia Post to assist with mail delivery. Australia Post does not currently define geographic boundaries for postcodes. However, a number of organisations, such as PSMA Australia Limited or Pitney Bowes, create geographic boundaries that aim to define the geographic extent of the mail delivery area for each postcode. Defining postcodes with a geographic boundary is an imprecise process, and this is demonstrated by the fact that there are variations in boundaries released by different organisations.

Postcodes cover most, but not all, of Australia; for example, western Tasmania is not covered by a postcode.

Because postcodes are a well-known and easily collected component of an address, they are used by many researchers and businesses as a way of linking data to a geographic area for spatial analysis.

The ABS provides 'Postcode Indexes' and 'Population Weighted Correspondences' that can be used to link data collected with a postcode to standard ABS geographic areas – for example, Statistical Areas Level 4 (SA4s) and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas (GCCSAs) within the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) or Statistical Divisions (SDs) within the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). This enables data to be directly compared with a range of other ABS data that is released on both the ASGS and the ASGC. For a full list of coding indexes and population weighted correspondences available, please view the '**Correspondences**' chapter of the ABS Statistical Geography website: <http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>

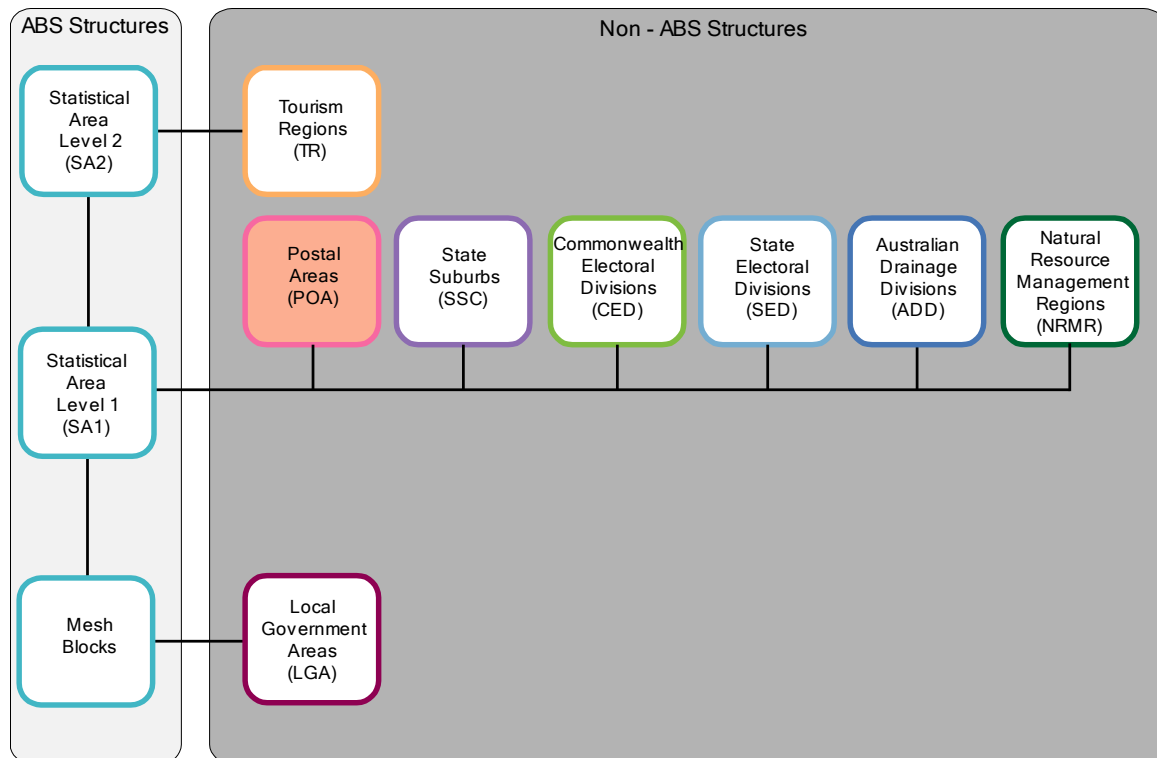
What are ABS Postal Areas and what is their purpose?

Postal Areas (POAs) are an ABS approximation of postcodes created to enable the release of ABS data on areas that, as closely as possible, approximate postcodes. This enables the comparison of ABS data with other data collected using postcodes. POAs are approximated using one or more Statistical Areas Level 1 (SA1s) from the ASGS. SA1s are the smallest geographic areas on which Census data are released. Previously, POAs were defined using aggregations of Census Collection Districts (CCDs).

POAs are defined to cover the whole of geographic Australia. However, Unclassified POAs, which represent areas not covered by postcodes, are not represented as spatial objects in the POA digital boundaries.

POAs are incorporated into the ASGS as a Non-ABS Structure. These are geographic areas that approximate administrative or environmental boundaries which are not defined by the ABS, but are important to users of ABS statistics. Diagram 1 illustrates how POAs (in orange) relate to other ASGS and Non-ABS structures.

Diagram 1: ASGS Non-ABS Structures and 2011 SLA



How were POAs created?

In developing POAs, each SA1 is allocated an Australia Post postcode. POAs derived in this way only **approximate** Australia Post postcode boundaries. SA1 allocations are based on the distribution of dwellings, not on area. This means that an SA1 is allocated to the postcode to which it contributes the most dwellings. POAs are then formed by joining the SA1s that have been allocated the same postcode.

Allocations have been determined using the best available information on postcode boundaries. Unfortunately, official postcode boundaries have not been updated since the early 1990s and none of the more recent interpretations have been endorsed by Australia Post. **Users should be aware of these limitations when using the POA classification.**

Unallocated postcodes

Some Australia Post postcodes are not included in the POA classification. This occurs when no SA1 can be allocated to a particular postcode. There are two situations when this occurs where:

- an SA1 covers two or more whole postcodes, the SA1 can be allocated to only one POA
- more than one SA1 partially covers a postcode, but all the SA1s are allocated to other postcodes with which they also share area.

A list of delivery area postcodes not included in the POA classification is provided at the end of this document.

The POAs also exclude Australia Post postcodes that are not street delivery areas. These include post office boxes, mail back competitions, large volume receivers and specialist delivery postcodes. These postcodes are only valid for postal addresses and are not a valid location for population data.

POAs that cross state or territory borders

Where POAs cross state or territory borders, standard Census products will provide data for the entire POA. The following table lists these POAs.

Postal Area	Postal Areas that cross state or territory borders
POA 0872	Postal Area 0872 crosses into NT, SA and WA
POA 2540	Postal Area 2540 crosses NSW and OT (Jervis Bay)
POA 2618	Postal Area 2618 crosses NSW and ACT
POA 2620	Postal Area 2620 crosses NSW and ACT
POA 3585	Postal Area 3585 crosses Vic. and NSW
POA 3644	Postal Area 3644 crosses Vic. and NSW
POA 4383	Postal Area 4383 crosses Qld and NSW
POA 4825	Postal Area 4825 crosses Qld and NT

Working with data on POAs

When working with data on POAs, it is important to remember that the POAs are approximations, using SA1s, of the postcode boundaries and that the data relate to the POA boundary and not to the postcode boundary. The POA classification also excludes some postcodes and therefore, there will be no Census data for these postcodes.

In some cases, users of Census data may have trouble reconciling their own postcode based statistics with Census data because:

- Many respondents mis-report their postcode.
- It is difficult to determine the 'correct' postcode for some respondents, particularly where post office boxes and rural delivery services are concerned.
- POA Census data reflect either the location of a person's usual residence (for usual residence data) or the location of a person on Census night (as enumerated data). By contrast, many non-ABS datasets only record the postcode of a person's mailing address. Since many people have different mailing and residential addresses the datasets are difficult to reconcile.
- Postcode boundaries change over time and it can take a long time for respondents and coding systems to adjust to a change in a postcode. This causes problems when working with postcode-based data taken from different reference periods, as the changes to the boundaries can be difficult to reconcile with changes in the population.

What data is available on POAs?

Data from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing is available for POAs.

Where can I get the POA boundaries?

POA boundaries are available in MapInfo Interchange and ESRI Shapefile formats and can be downloaded from the '**ABS Geography Publications**' chapter of the ABS Statistical Geography website: <http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>

In mid-2012, the ABS released DataPacks containing 2011 Census Community Profile data for all of Australia and digital boundary map files. DataPacks are available either by downloading files from the ABS website, or by purchasing a DVD. Users who wish to download DataPacks directly from the ABS website will need to register first and then download a DataPack based on a profile for a selected geography (e.g. all SA1s). Access to 2011 Census data is available through the ABS website: <http://www.abs.gov.au>

More information on Census 2011 products and services is available through the publication: [Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing - Products and Services, 2011](#) (cat. no. 2011.0.55.001).

Where can I get further information?

A detailed discussion of the POAs and the criteria used in their design can be found at: [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 3 – Non ABS Structures, July 2011](#) (cat. no. 1270.0.55.003).

More information on the ASGS and ABS Statistical Geography can be found at: [Australian Statistical Geography Standard: Volume 1 Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2011](#) (cat. no. 1270.0.55.001) or by visiting the ABS Statistical Geography website: <http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>

Any questions or comments can be emailed to geography@abs.gov.au

Unallocated Delivery Area Postcodes

The following tables list the delivery area postcodes for each state and territory that were not included in the 2011 POA classification.

New South Wales

Australia Post postcode	Locality
2091	HMAS PENGUIN
2123	PARRAMATTA
2309	DANGAR
2331	Multiple Localities
2356	GWABEGAR
2379	Multiple Localities
2387	Multiple Localities
2398	GURLEY
2411	CROPPA CREEK
2522	UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
2624	PERISHER VALLEY
2734	Multiple Localities
2755	RICHMOND RAAF
2818	Multiple Localities
2826	Multiple Localities
2838	GOODOOGA
2899	NORFOLK ISLAND

Victoria

Australia Post postcode	Locality
3050	ROYAL MELBOURNE HOSPITAL
3271	Multiple Localities
3279	Multiple Localities
3322	CRESSY
3323	Multiple Localities
3415	MIRAM
3432	BOLINDA
3487	LASCELLES
3488	Multiple Localities
3489	TEMPY
3506	COWANGIE
3529	Multiple Localities
3565	KOTTA
3576	DURHAM OX
3583	TRESCO
3599	BOUNDARY BEND
3607	TABILK
3647	DOOKIE COLLEGE
3665	Multiple Localities
3704	KOETONG
3708	TINTALDRA
3718	MOLESWORTH
3738	OVENS
3762	BYLANDS
3893	Multiple Localities
3946	BENA
3964	PORT FRANKLIN
3967	HEDLEY
3990	GLEN FORBES

Queensland

Australia Post postcode	Locality
4029	ROYAL BRISBANE HOSPITAL
4222	GRIFFITH UNIVERSITY
4384	LIMEVALE
4418	GULUGUBA
4423	Multiple Localities
4426	Multiple Localities
4461	MUCKADILLA
4467	Multiple Localities
4471	CLAVERTON
4474	ADAVALE
4475	CHEEPIE
4479	COOLADDI
4482	BIRDSVILLE
4489	WYANDRA
4491	EULO
4493	HUNGERFORD
4697	RAGLAN
4704	Multiple Localities
4706	OGMORE
4732	Multiple Localities
4736	JUNDAH

South Australia

Australia Post postcode	Locality
5150	Multiple Localities
5273	AVENUE RANGE
5306	WYNARKA
5310	Multiple Localities
5418	Multiple Localities
5420	Multiple Localities
5432	Multiple Localities
5455	HILLTOWN
5471	GULNARE
5493	YONGALA
5632	Multiple Localities
5651	KYANCUTTA
5653	YANINEE
5655	Multiple Localities
5660	Multiple Localities
5661	Multiple Localities
5671	Multiple Localities
5730	Multiple Localities
5733	Multiple Localities

Western Australia

Australia Post postcode	Locality
6034	EGLINTON
6038	ALKIMOS
6223	BENGER
6228	WATERLOO
6243	Multiple Localities
6252	MULLALYUP
6351	Multiple Localities
6356	Multiple Localities
6357	PINGARING
6361	Multiple Localities
6363	Multiple Localities
6372	YEALERING
6384	PANTAPIN
6385	KWOLYIN
6411	Multiple Localities
6412	Multiple Localities
6414	NANGEENAN
6419	ARDATH
6420	Multiple Localities
6422	WALGOOLAN
6424	Multiple Localities
6427	KOOLYANOBING
6428	BABAKIN
6446	GRASS PATCH
6452	Multiple Localities
6463	BENJABERRING
6465	MANMANNING
6466	CADOUX
6467	BURAKIN
6470	KULJA
6473	Multiple Localities
6476	GABBIN
6480	NUKARNI
6487	Multiple Localities
6489	Multiple Localities
6504	MOOLIABEENEE
6506	MOGUMBER
6512	Multiple Localities
6571	YERECOIN
6572	PIAWANING
6574	Multiple Localities

6605	KONDUT
6613	BUNTINE
6614	MAYA
6616	LATHAM
6625	MERKANOOKA
6627	CANNA
6631	PINDAR
6632	Multiple Localities
6711	THEVENARD ISLAND
6712	BARROW ISLAND
6731	COCKATOO ISLAND
6733	KOOLAN ISLAND

Tasmania

Australia Post postcode	Locality
7001	HOBART
7119	STONOR
7139	STRATHGORDON
7174	COPPING
7175	Multiple Localities
7185	PREMAYDENA
7187	KOONYA
7466	GORMANSTON

Northern Territory

Australia Post postcode	Locality
0834	VIRGINIA
0839	COOLALINGA
0909	CHARLES DARWIN UNIVERSITY

Australian Capital Territory

No unallocated Australia Post postcodes.

Other Territories

No unallocated Australia Post postcodes.